#707

EVANGELICAL TRACT SOCIETY,
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No. 61.

WORDS OF WARNING.

"*Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him.*"—Isa. iii. 11.
"*To whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.*"—2 Pet. ii. 17.

Unconverted Sinner, thy state is sad, and thy misery is great! No tongue can tell how sad is that state—no soul can conceive how great is that misery. Thine heart may well meditate terror, for thou art still unpardoned, uncleansed, unsaved! Thy feet are just about to stumble upon the dark mountains; and woe, woe, yea, ten thousand times woe to thy poor soul, if this night it were required of thee. Poor forlorn soul! Thou hast no God, and therefore thou hast no happiness! Thou hast no Christ, and therefore thou hast no pardon, no peace! Thou art without a father, without a friend, without a hope, and without a home! This earth is truly to thee "a wilderness and a land of darkness." Thou walkest through it a houseless, homeless wanderer; no arm to lean upon, no chosen companion of your secret thoughts and feelings; no friend to soothe your griefs or share your joys! Thou mayest have what men call a father, a brother, a home, on earth; but thou canst not call God thy father, nor Jesus thy brother, nor heaven thy home above! Thou wanderest on from day to day, a houseless homeless outcast, seeing nothing around thee but trouble and sorrow, and nothing before thee or above thee but the blackness of darkness for ever! Jude 13.

Thou art an enemy to God! Rom. viii. 7. And who has ever hardened his heart against Him and prospered? An enemy to the blessed God? An enemy to Him that made thee,—to one that has never wronged thee in ought,—to one that has loved thee with a love so true and tender as to give for thee His only begotten Son! Yea, thou *hatest* Him! John xv. 24. Thou treatest Him as if He were some hateful and hated fellow-worm, whose company thou couldst not endure. Job xxi. 14. O what vile ingratitude, what desperate malignity, thus to return enmity for friendship, hatred and scorn for gentleness and love! The most lovable object in all the universe is the object that thou hatest most! O what madness, what enormous wickedness!

Thou art a child of wrath. Eph. ii. 3. And O, what words can express, or what mind can conceive, all that is meant by this! Every thing threatens wrath to thee. Thou dost not yet, indeed, gnaw thy tongue for pain, or gnash thy teeth in agony, but thou shalt shortly do so, if grace prevent not. I dare not call thee a "vessel of wrath fitted for destruction," Rom. ix. 22; for who knows but thy God may yet pluck thee as a brand from the burning; but at least I know that so long as thou remainest unconverted, thou art treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. And if to be a child of wrath be so awful a thing, even when seen afar off in this place of mercy, O what must be the horrors of that wrath throughout eternity! A child of wrath!—that is, all made up of wrath—whose very being is wrath! The air thou shalt breathe in shall be wrath—burning wrath! The light in which thou shalt dwell shall be scorching wrath; how different from the pleasant sunshine of earth, and the cool fresh air of morning! Wrath shall be within thee and around thee; above thee and beneath thee: wrath shall throb in every pulse and flow in every vein! And it shall be FOR EVER! O that word which sums up all despair! For ever! The eternal wrath of the eternal God; the unchangeable wrath of the unchangeable God! Poor child of wrath, wilt thou not turn and flee?

Thou art a child of the devil! Matt. xiii. 38; Acts xiii. 10. Satan is thy master, and thou art his willing slave. Poor miserable soul, canst thou be content with such a master and such a bondage? Remember! thy bondage is eternal, thy chains eternal, thy prison-house eternal, thy torment and thy tormenters are eternal! If thou diest out of Christ, hell must be thy habitation for ever. O what an abode!—amid flames and wrath; echoing eternally with wailings of woe that might melt the very mountain-rock! It is called "a lake burning with fire and brimstone," Rev. xxi. 8; Psal. xi. 6; that is, with the hottest, fiercest, most penetrating, most tormenting of all flames. It is called a lake. Not a river, whose waters of burning anguish might be dried up or pass away; nor a sea which ebbs and flows, and whose wide extent or perpetual change, or wind-swept surface might furnish some respite some cooling relief. No; but a *lake*—still, stagnant, gloomy,

and unchangeable! But more than this—thy soul itself shall be its own hell. Even were there no flames without, the furnace within shall be torment beyond endurance. Thy passions, thy unsatisfied desires, thy conscience, will be thy worst tormentors, worse than all the fiends of darkness—tormentors from which thou canst not flee. All that thou mightest have gained, all that thou hast lost forever, shall curse thee with thy bitter memory. Earth *lost*—friends *lost*—possessions *lost*—time *lost*—the soul *lost*—heaven *lost*—eternity *undone!* Poor sinner, why wilt thou not live? Precious immortal, why wilt thou die? Prov. i. 23; Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

Poor Christless soul, what a bitter lot is thine? What a doom of wrath and woe! To be tormented day and night for ever, in presence of the holy angels and in presence of the Lamb! The bottomless pit incloses thee for ever, and seals thy everlasting despair. Ah! the most distant and lonely hill of immortality would be welcome in comparison with this; aye, the gloomiest wilderness of earth would be Paradise when compared with this! There joy is a thing unknown. Love is a thing forgotten; or remembered only as a part of the once familiar scenes of earth, now gone for ever! No peace nor hope in all the God-forsaken regions of the damned! No Saviour troubles you now with his offers of life. No God wearies you with his messages of love. Life and love belong only to heaven: and thou art in hell. Thy portion is the second death. Who shall undo your prison-bolt, or unbind you chain? Who shall fetch water to pour upon the unquenchable fire, or obtain even one drop to cool your burning tongue? Who shall dig the worm that never dies, out of your tortured marrow? Who shall sooth your hopeless wailing, or dry up your everlasting tears? No friends now; no companions now! The mirth of the world is over, and all its glory is departed. The song and the dance are over. Job xxi. 12, 13. The revelry of midnight is hushed, and the pleasant sunshine of earth has been exchanged for the blackness of darkness forever. With all these certainties in view, O! what is this world to a dying creature? What are all its pleasures or its business to a being formed for immortality? Poor dying sinner! dost

thou not know that Jesus died that he might deliver you from the present evil world? Poor child of sin and dust, wilt thou not become an heir of endless glory?

Sinner as thou art, still there is hope—hope for *thee*; for thou art in the place of hope. This is the acceptable year of the Lord, and God willeth not that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 1 Tim. ii. 42; Peter iii 6. He has no pleasure in your death. He lays his solemn *command* on thee that thou shouldst believe and be saved; so that the highest act of iniquity, is to refuse salvation, to refuse the free gift of life! He entreats thee to turn and live. He yearns over thee with a father's tender love. Yes! the love of thy God is a true and sincere love. It is no mere idea, it is reality. The words in which he has declared this to thee are not the language of mockery. They do mean all that they seem to do: only they come infinitely short of the sincerity, the warmth, the tenderness of his paternal affection. They are but rays from the Sun of love. They are but the scattered drops from the ocean, the measureless ocean of the Father's love!

Poor sinner! if thou diest, it is not because of any want of love in God or any want of sufficiency in Christ. It is not because God would not be reconciled to thee, but because thou wouldst not be reconciled to God. His heart is toward thee; his desires are toward thee. Your sins and iniquities have not made him cease to care for you. His interest in your welfare is still as sincere as deep. Not that he palliates your sin, or excuses your continuance in it;—no; but that he longs to deliver you from it; and so warm and tender is the interest which he takes in you, that he seeks to compass this deliverance by every means. Do not suppose that there must be something good about you before he can feel kindly towards you. His thoughts towards you have always been, and still are, thoughts of unutterable compassion. In your misery, in your forlorn state of sin and danger, there is something which calls forth the affectionate interest of Him who made you. O, despise not, distrust not, love so infinite so divine. Do not wait, do not delay. Do not say, "I must try to prepare myself for coming to God." No! Come at *once:* come *as you are*: come *this moment!*

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